

Message Text

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ACTION EA-10

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R 201301Z JUN 75

FM AMEMBASSY CONAKRY

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0855

INFO AMCONSUL HONG KONG

USLO PEKING

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

C O N F I D E N T I A L CONAKRY 0929

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PFOR MARR EIND PGOV GV UR CH DM

SUBJECT: VIEWS OF CHINESE AMBASSADOR

REF: CONAKRY 1599 (OCT 25, 1974)

BEGIN CUMMARY: PRC AMBASSADOR CHI-CHIEN TSIEN RECEIVED ME IN CORDIAL FASHION FOR 45-MINUTE COURTESY CALL JUNE 19, CONDUCTED IN ENGLISH. HE WAS OUTSPOKENLY CRITICAL OF USSR DURING HIGHLY SUBSTANTIVE EXCHANGE. WE AGREED TO MEET AND TRADE VIEWS PERIODICALLY. FOLLOWING IS RUNDOWN OF MAIN POINTS DISCUSSED. END SUMMARY.

1. SOVIET/GUINEA RELATIONS: TONE OF CONVERSATION WAS ESTABLISHED SHORTLY AFTER FORMALITIES WHEN TSIEN ASKED HOW SOVIET AMBASSADOR HAD STRUCK ME. I SAID HE SEEMED A COLD TYPE. TSIEN CHUCKLED WITH PLEASURE AT THIS CHARACTERIZATION. HE SAID THERE WAS EVIDENCE OF GROWING STRAIN BETWEEN GOG AND USSR, E.G.:

A. GUINEANS WERE DISSATISFIED THAT THERE HAD BEEN NO NEW SOVIET AID PROJECTS IN 10 YEARS ("SINCE BREZHNEV") DESPITE MASSIVE SOVIET PRESENCE IN GUINEA ("OVER 1,000"). SOVIET ACTIVITY WAS VIRTUALLY LIMITED TO SELLING OBSOLESCEMENT MILITARY EQUIPMENT IN RETURN FOR BAUXITE WHICH USSR OBTAINED AT CONCESSIONAL PRICE.

B. GOG HAD INSISTED OVER SOVIET OBJECTIONS THAT NEW MINERALS EXPORT TAX APPLY TO SOVIET AS WELL AS OTHER BAUXITE;

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TSIEN UNDERSTOOD SOVIETS WERE PAYING \$4 TO \$5 PER TON.

C. PRO-SOVIET DIRECTOR OF GUINEA RADIO HAD JUST BEZV
REMOVED. (EMBASSY IS CHECKING THIS STORY).

D. ALTHOUGH SOVIETS WERE STILL INTERESTED IN PROPOSED
TAMARA ISLAND NAVAL FACILITY, GUINEANS WERE BEGINNING TO QUESTION
WHETHER A NAVAL BASE WOULD NOT BE MUCH MORE USEFUL TO USSR
THAN TO GUINEA. PROJECT HAD NOT GONE FORWARD. (IN ANSWER MY
QUESTION, HE SAID THAT PRC HAD NO INTENTION OF BECOMING
INVOLVED IN TAMARA FACILITY.)

2. FOOD RELIEF: TSIEN SAID CHINA HAD PROVIDED 45,000 TONS OF
RICE IN 1973, 25,000 TONS IN 1974, AND 10,000 TONS (ARRIVING
CONAKRY THIS WEEK) IN 1975. IN RESPONSE TO MY QUESTION AS TO HOW
QUANTITIES DETERMINED, TSIEN SAID PRC PROVIDED WHAT GOG REQUESTED,
AND COULD HAVE FURNISHED MORE IN 1975. HE IMPLIED THAT THIS WAS
GRANT AID. HE WAS WELL INFORMED AND KEENLY INTERESTED IN USPL-
480 PROGRAM IN GUINEA. ALTHOUGH TSIEN AGREED WITH MY COMMENT
THAT FOOD DONATIONS WERE NOT CONDUCIVE TO DEVELOPMENT AND SERVED
TO PROLONG INEFFICIENT AGRICULTURAL POLICIES, HE LEFT
IMPRESSION THAT PRC WAS PREPARED TO PROVIDE WHATEVER GOG ASKED
FOR AGAIN IN 1976. I SAID SOVIET AMBASSADOR HAD TOLD ME OF A
SOVIET GRANT OF 20,000 TONS OF GRAIN IN 1975. TSIEN SAID HE DID
NOT BELIEVE IT SINCE THERE HAD BEEN NO PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE
SORT INVARIABLY MADE IN SUCH CASES.

3. PRC TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM; TSIEN SAID CHINESE AID WAS
IN THREE AREAS: MEDICINE (TEACHERS AND PRACTISING PHYSICIANS),
AGRICULTURE (PRIMARILY RICE TECHNOLOGY), AND SMALL INDUSTRY
(SUGAR
REFINING, BUILDING MATERIALS, CIGARETTES, CRUSHING OF
OIL SEEDS). CHINESE EXPERTS AND DIPLOMATS SERVE A TOUR AVERAGING
THREE YEARS. GOG WAS REQUESTING INCREASED AID BUT CHINESE PRO-
GRAMS WOULD PROBABLY STAY ON ROUGHLY PRESENT LEVEL "FOR NEXT 50
YEARS OF FRIENDSHIP". PRC ENDEAVORED RESPOND TO GOG REQUESTS BUT
AS POLICY MATTER ALWAYS FURNISHED A LITTLE LESS THAN WAS ASKED.
CHINA, UNLIKE USSR, HAD NO SECURITY NOR ECONOMIC INTERESTS IN
ATLANTIC BASIN AND SOUGHT NOTHING BUT FRIENDSHIP FROM GUINEA.
IN RESPONSE TO QUESTION, TSIEN SAID GOG HAD BROACHED POSSIBILITY
OF MILITARY KID BUT PVC HAD NOT RESPONDED. I DO NOT THINK
TSIEN MEANT TO IMPLY THAT QUESTION OF MILITARY AID WAS STILL UNDER
CONSIDERATION, ALTHOUGH I COULD NOT BE CERTAIN.
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4. VISIT TO PRC RICE RESEARCH FACILITY: I MENTIONED USEFUL
COLLABORATION WHICH HAD DEVELOPED BETWEEN CHINESE SCIENTISTS
AND AMERICANS AT INTERNATIONAL RICE RESEARCH INSTITUTE IN PHIL-
IPPINES. I DESCRIBED NEW USAID PROJECT IN GUINEA WHICH IS TO IN-
CLUDE DEMONSTRATION OF MODERN RICE-GROWING TECHNOLOGY. I ASKED
TSIEN IF US AGRONOMISTS CURRENTLY IN GUINEA COULD VISIT CHINESE
RICE IRRIGATION PROJECT IN KANKAN. HE SAID THEY COULD NOT DO SO

AT PRESENT, BUT PERHAPS LATER ON.

5. GUINEAN ECONOMY: TSIEN SAID THAT ECONOMY AND PARTICULARLY AGRICULTURE SEEMED IN REAL TROUBLE. HE FELT MUCH DEPENDED UPON GOG ABILITY TO EFFECTIVELY DISTRIBUTE THE LARGER QUANTITY OF CONSUMER GOODS REPORTEDLY ON ORDER. HETUXPRESSED GREAT SATISFACTION THAT ACCORDING HIS INFORMATION BULK OF GOODS HAD BEEN PURCHASED IN SWEBSN AND SWITZERLAND AND NOT IN EASTERN EUROPE.

6. REFERENCE TO SOVIET TU-95 AIRCRAFT REPORTED SEPTTEL.

7. COMMENT: IT WAS CLEAR THROUGHOUT CONVERSATION THAT PRIMARY CHINESE INTEREST IN GUINEA WAS TO COUNTER SOVIET INFLUENCE (ALTHOUGH PRC EMBASSY'S THRICE WEEKLY NEWS BULLETIN CONTAINS PLENTY OF ANTI-US IMPERIALISM JARGON AS WELL). I HAVE IMPRESSION THAT TSIEN WAS STILL MORE FORTHCOMING IN THIS MEETING THAN IN HIS EARLIER TALKS, AND HIS PREDECESSOR'S WITH U.S. AMBASSADOR. HE ALSO SEEMED MORE CONFIDENT OF HIS INTELLMENCE ABOUT SOVIET ACTIVITIES IN GUINEA. I EXPECT TO MEET TSIEN AGAIN WITHIN A MONTH. IF DEPARTMENT WISHES SUGGEST ANY PARTICULAR LINE OF QUESTIONS OR WISHES ME TO MAKE ANY PARTICULAR POINTS LET ME KNOW.
HARROP

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